

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ONY-00 ISO-00 /013 R

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APPROVED BY EA/K - MR. BLAKEMORE
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R 192341Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
XMT AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SUVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 015652

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, ETRD, MILI, KS, US

SUBJECT: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - KOREA

TO: EA - MR. HOLBROOKE

FROM: EA/K - DAVID BLAKEMORE, ACTING

1. DEVELOPMENTS AFTER THE MYONGDONG PRISONER RELEASES
(CONFIDENTIAL) - THE DISSIDENT GROUP WHICH HAD BEEN NEGOTIA-
TING WITH THE ROKG OVER THE TERMS OF THE STATEMENT SIGNED
BY THE PRISONERS DID NOT CONSULT WITH KIM TAE-CHUNG DURING
THE FINAL STAGES OF NEGOTIATION NOR DID THEY GIVE KIM AN
OPPORTUNITY TO SIGN THE STATEMENT. THE REASON FOR AVOIDING
KIM'S INVOLVEMENT WAS TO AVOID HIS POSSIBLE LOSS OF REPUTA-
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TION IF THE PUBLIC FELT HE WAS MAKING A "DEAL" WITH THE
ROKG. IF KIM IS NOT RELEASED BY THE END OF JANUARY, THE
DISSIDENT LEADERS PROBABLY WILL ASK HIM TO SIGN A STATE-
MENT FOR THE SAKE OF OTHER DISSIDENTS.

MANY OF OUR INQUIRIES FROM THE PUBLIC HAVE INCLUDED
QUESTIONS ABOUT A PRISONER STATEMENT. AMERICAN FRIENDS OF

THE DISSIDENTS ARE APPARENTLY INTERESTED IN DEMONSTRATING THAT THE ROKG HAS FORCED THE MYONGDONG PRISONERS TO GIVE UP CIVIL RIGHTS TO EFFECT THEIR RELEASE. FOR THEIR PART,

THE DISSIDENTS DO NOT WANT PUBLICITY ABOUT THE RELEASE STATEMENTS AND THEY ARE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED THAT THE KCIA HAS KEPT ITS WORD NOT TO PUBLICIZE THE ISSUE.

2. PRAYER MEETING WELCOMES RELEASED PRISONERS

(CONFIDENTIAL) - A CROWD OF ONE THOUSAND ATTENDED A PRAYER MEETING THE EVENING OF JANUARY 16 AT MYONGDONG CATHEDRAL TO WELCOME THE RELEASED PRISONERS. APPROXIMATELY 200 REMAINED AT THE CATHEDRAL FOR A RALLY, AT WHICH THE PRISONERS MADE STRONG ANTI-REGIME STATEMENTS. THE POLICE REPORTEDLY INTERVENED QUICKLY AND TRANSPORTED THE PARTICIPANTS TO ANOTHER PART OF TOWN BY BUS, WHERE THEY WERE RELEASED. NONE REMAIN IN POLICE CUSTODY. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE ROKG IS CONCERNED, BUT NOT ALARMED BY THE RECENT BEHAVIOUR OF DISSIDENTS SET AT LIBERTY.

3. ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY MEASURE RELEASE PREDICTED

(CONFIDENTIAL) - THE KCIA HAS REPORTEDLY TOLD A LEADING DISSIDENT THAT "ALMOST ALL" THE REMAINING EM-9 PRISONERS HAVE SIGNED STATEMENTS AND THEIR RELEASE IS IMMINENT. DISSIDENT LEADERS ARE PREPARED TO WAIT FOR THE RELEASES UNTIL THE END OF JANUARY BEFORE CONTACTING THE KCIA
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AGAIN.

4. KOREA TAKES FURTHER STEPS TO LIBERALIZE IMPORTS

(UNCLASSIFIED) - IN ITS TRADE PLAN FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1978, THE ROKG HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD ITS GOALS OF IMPORT LIBERALIZATION. 126 COMMODITY ITEMS, PREVIOUSLY BANNED OR SUBJECT TO PRIOR APPROVAL, MAY NOW BE IMPORTED UNDER "AUTOMATIC APPROVAL". LIBERALIZED ITEMS OF PARTICULAR TRADE INTEREST TO AMERICAN SUPPLIERS INCLUDE METAL SCOURING MACHINES, AIR LIQUIDIZING EQUIPMENT AND SPECIAL CRANES. THE TRADE PLAN INCLUDES A VARIETY OF ADDITIONAL MEASURES -- SOME NEUTRAL AND OTHERS MORE RESTRICTIVE IN THEIR IMPACT. ACCORDING TO ROKG CLAIMS, THE NET EFFECT WILL BE TO INCREASE 1978 IMPORTS BY BETWEEN \$500 MILLION AND \$1 BILLION.

5. UNC REAR (CONFIDENTIAL) - WE HAVE HEARD ENCOURAGING

NOISES FROM THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY TO THE EFFECT THAT THE GOA IS STILL ACTIVELY CONSIDERING THE ASSIGNMENT OF TWO MEN TO THE UNC REAR IN JAPAN TO REPLACE THE TWO BRITS WHO ARE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE THAT POST IN JULY. WE HAVE ASKED EMBASSY CANBERRA TO CHECK INTO THE STATE OF PLAY OF

THIS ISSUE WITHIN THE GOA.

6. EA/K TRAVEL (UNCLASSIFIED) - BOB RICH TRAVELED TO

NEW YORK JANUARY 19 TO ADDRESS A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE
US-KOREA ECONOMIC COUNCIL. HE WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS
PRESENCE IN THE METROPOLIS TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE
KOREAN SECTION OF THE ASIA SOCIETY AND THE COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY SEMINAR ON KOREA. FORMER FSO DONALD MACDONALD
WILL PRESENT A PAPER AT COLUMBIA ON KOREAN POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENT. BOB WILL BE BACK IN THE OFFICE JANUARY 23.
CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE015652
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FLW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780030-0556
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780143/aaaabkfp.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ed2ec7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3745148
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - KOREA TO: EA - MR. HOLBROOKE FROM: EA/K - DAVID BLAKEMORE, ACTING
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, ETRD, MILI, KS, US
To: EA POSTS PORT MORESBY MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ed2ec7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014